



**Parent Links
Is...**

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A Place at the Table
Excerpt from [Deaf Parenting](#)

Well, it is the busy holiday time again! It is such a wonderful time for celebrations and family at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukah, and of course the New Year's celebration. You are so busy. There is shopping to do; travel plans to make; relatives coming to visit; going to relatives to visit; cooking to be done; going to worship; the list just goes on and on.

Through this busy time when family celebrations are happening, it is really important to have effective communication with your Deaf child and to include them in all the activities. Your hearing children are picking up from general conversations, phone conversations etc. what is happening and all the plans that are being made. You may not even realize that your Deaf child does not even know the names of the relatives. Some planning can ease your frustration and your child's frustration.

Here are some tips:

1. Try to explain to your child the family plans. You can do this by explaining to your child what the family will be doing tomorrow or on the next trip. For example, we will be going to the airport, taking a plane to New York to visit Aunt Jane, Uncle Joe and Cousin John and June. Use pictures and sign language to explain to your child the names of new people they will meet. When your child is older and can read you can always write a simple itinerary and share it with all family members before trips.
2. Make the effort to interpret for your child what is being said. You can share the interpreting among various family members. An excellent place to interpret what is happening is at the dinner table.
3. Concerning going to worship, most places will provide an interpreter if you contact them early enough. You can volunteer to contact the interpreter and make the arrangements if necessary. It is strongly recommended that you request an interpreter at least 2 months in advance, or find worship services where they provide an interpreter all year round. The place of worship should pay for the interpreter. What we have been doing lately when we visit out of state is attend a church which has an interpreter and Deaf members. The last church we went to had a Deaf minister and interpreter, with all the people in the same service and location. Larry and Amrit really enjoyed worship and felt included.
4. I have found that young children are very eager to learn to sign. You can send a sign language book or DVD to your child's cousins before the visit so they can learn some signs.
5. Everyone enjoys learning the signs for the various holidays. Have your child teach the relatives those signs and other signs. Make it a fun activity.
6. If you are visiting somewhere, make sure the TV closed caption is always on.

I hope these simple tips are helpful! Please add your tips by commenting on the blog! Happy Holidays!

Gratitude Turkey Treat Jar

Toddler Approved



Materials Needed: glue, candy, jars with lids, colored cardstock, scissors, markers, and googly eyes.

Directions:

1. Used leftover Halloween candy or candy that would fit perfectly inside a baby food jar (such as m&m's)
2. Fill the clean jar with treats.
3. Draw some feathers.
4. Cut out the feathers! This is a good scissor skills activity for little ones.
5. Make sure that jar is FULL and the lid is on



6. Brainstorm who you want to give your jar to and your favorite things to do with that person (or why you are grateful for that person).
7. Add some double stick tape to the back of the jar and start sticking the feathers on. The main instruction I gave to my son was that the words needed to face me.
8. Use some glue and add on a beak, googly eyes, and a gobbler. Then let everything dry.
9. Review all of the things that you wrote on the feathers together and then deliver your treat turkey!



Importance and Benefits of Incidental Learning

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Children are born wired to learn. They learn from what they see, hear, smell, taste, feel, etc. By interacting with the environment and people around them, babies learn specific things, such as how others respond to certain actions, behaviors, emotions, or words. This is incidental learning.

A child begins incidental learning at birth through interactions with mother and others. As the child grows, and just by being around other people, she/he absorbs important information about socializing, what is appropriate and inappropriate, and the meaning of body language, voice tones of others, facial

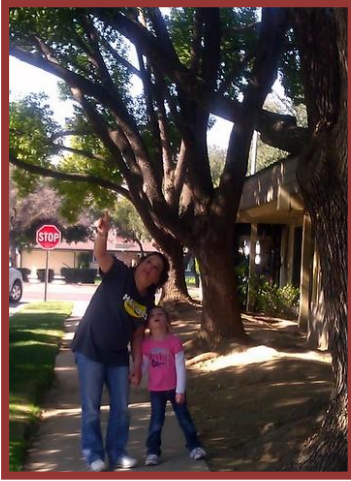
expressions, etc. (Bandura, A; Huston, Althea C)

Here are two examples:

1. A two-year-old sees his sister get a shot from the doctor. He sees that she begins to cry. In his mind, he now understands that shot = hurt. Now his mother says it is his turn to get a shot. He immediately begins to cry and says no. He has learned from watching and listening that he does not want to experience the same thing his sister did.
2. A parent becomes upset at a child because he demanded candy in a store. The child was told that if he showed good behavior while in the store, he would get a candy reward after they returned home. He did not behave and later did not get the candy reward.

Other children who see or overhear other people talking would learn that certain behaviors are acceptable or not acceptable and that certain consequences would follow. If a child is Deaf or Hard of Hearing, she/he may miss out on this opportunity to indirectly learn what happens if she/he do the same thing.

It is important to constantly communicate with your child and involve him or her in conversations about people, special events, daily activities, traditions, family values and rules, and the environment. Each conversation teaches your child important information about the world around him or her.



Tips on Helping your Child Learn:

1. Take your child on a nature walk and identify different things the two of you see, smell, taste, touch, and hear. If your Deaf or Hard of Hearing child has some hearing, the two of you can compare the different sounds you hear. You can label the sounds your child is hearing so your child can associate specific sounds to their causes. For example, the child may hear birds but may not recognize the twittering or chirping sounds.
2. Plan for learning time: If you are making dinner, give your child kitchen tools to play with.
3. Read to your child. Reading exposes your child to feelings, expressions, and situations.
4. Play games, such as facial expression or emotion games. These games can be found at most teaching stores or online.
5. Create a picture ring. Take pictures of your child's world, family, teachers, favorite toys or familiar places, such as the grocery store or daycare. Include pictures showing emotions; laminate the pictures; and place pictures on the ring for your child. (Bondy, A, Frost, I. 2001)
6. Include your child in planning your daily schedule. By letting the child know what is happening, such as a doctor's appointment that day or meeting up with family or friends for lunch, your child can be part of the planning process.
7. Communicate with your child. When the child is very young, signing is a great way to include him/her and other siblings in conversations. Sign language exposure can be a critical first step to communication, and the key to development of reading and spoken language skills. (Glairon, 2003)



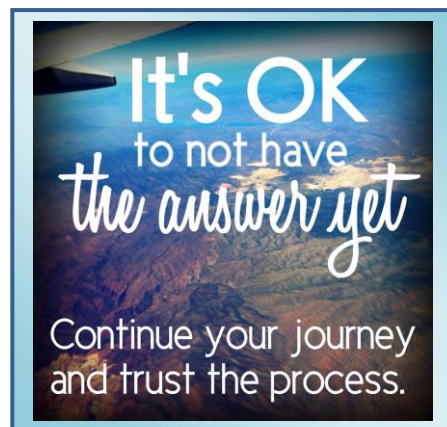
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Parent Mentors

Offering support to parents is what Parent Links is all about. Each mentor is a parent of a Deaf or Hard of Hearing child.

- Through email, phone and mail we are here to help answer the questions that parents may have about raising a child who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- Help parents find local connections.
- Parent Mentoring in Spanish and English... Just give us a call.

Exceptional Parents Unlimited

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